Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-02 INR-07 INRE-00 SSO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SP-02 SS-15 /040 W

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TO USINFO WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 042
NSC WHITE HOUSE WASHDC NIACTIMMEDIATE
CIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
USIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
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TEL AVIV MEDIA REACTION COLLECTIVE

CORRECTED COPY-MRN UPDATE

DEPT FOR NEA; USINFO FOR IOP/M, IPS, IBS, INA; BEIRUT ROME FOR VOA: GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E. O. 11652: N/A SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION PRESS REVIEW, JANUARY 17, 1978 (FIRST OF TWO CABLES: MORNING PRESS.)

FROM USIS TEL AVIV IN JERUSALEM

TEL AVIV FOR USIS SECSTATE FOR S/PRS AND PA NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI WHITE HOUSE FOR POWELL

1. SUMMARY: ISRAELI MEDIA GREET WITH APPREHENSION THE OPENING TODAY OF THE JERUSALEM TALKS. GREAT ATTENTION IS PAID TO WORDING OF AGENDA, BUT PAPERS KEEP REMINDING THAT "AGENDA IS NOT AGREEMENT." BOTH WASHINGTON AND CAIRO ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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SAID TO BE "PESSIMISTIC." DAYAN'S STATEMENT YESTERDAY THAT "IT IS ISRAEL'S INTERESTS AND NOT SADAT'S THREATS THAT WILL DIRECT OUR MOVES" IS PLAYED UP. EDITORIALS ARE NO DIFFERENT FROM FRONT PAGES IN NOTING "POLARIZATION OF POSITIONS." ALL AGREE, TOO, THAT THE U.S. CAN, SHOULD AND WOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE COMING TALKS. END SUMMARY.

- 2. ISRAEL T.V. LAST NIGHT QUOTED UNNAMED USG OFFICIALS AS HAVING EXPRESSED PESSIMISM REGARDING THE OUTCOME OF THE JERUSALEM TALKS. THE BEST THAT COULD BE EXPECTED, THEY REPORTEDLY SAID, WAS FOR THOSE NEGOTIATIONS TO PAVE WAY FOR ANOTHER SADAT-BEGIN MEETING THE ONLY CHANCE TO GET SOMEWHERE.
- 3. HA'ARETZ'S YOEL MARCUS REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON THAT "CIRCULES IN THE USG SUSPECT THAT BRINKMANSHIP IS GOING TO BE THE RULE OF THE GAME IN THE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS."

 MARCUS SAYS THAT THOSE CIRCLES HAVE "PRIVATELY CRITICIZED BEGIN'S SLOWNESS TO RECIPROCATE SADAT'S GENEROUS GESTURE."

 "OBSERVERS IN WASHINGTON" ARE SAID TO READ SECRETARY VANCE'S POSTPONEMENT OF HIS TRIP TO JERUSALEM AS A "WARNING DIRECTED AT ISRAEL RATHER THAN AT EGYPT."
- 4. REPORTING ON HOW THE VANCE PARTY VIEWS THE ONCOMING TALKS, HA'ARETZ'S UZI BENZIMAN AND DAN MARGALIT SAY THAT "NEGOTIATIONS WILL LEAD NOWHERE IF THE TWO PROTAGONISTS STICK TO THEIR OPENING POSITIONS." THAT IS WHY "VANCE INTENDS TO TRY AND TALK THE GOI INTO SOFTENING ITS STAND ON THE ISSUES OF THE SINAI SETTLEMENTS AND THE WEST BANK." AS TO SADAT, "VANCE IS GOING TO ASK HIM TO SHOW MORE UNDERSTANDING OF THE DOMESTIC OPPOSITION TO BEGIN'S PEACE PLAN."

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5. HA'ARETZ'S FRONT PAGE LOOKS RATHER GLOOMY COMPARED WITH OTHER PAPERS. LEAD STORIES IN THE INDEPENDENT, MODERATE PAPER ARE HEADLINED "EGYPT AND ISRAEL TOY WITH BRINKMANSHIP POLICY," "AGENDA IS BRIDGE OF BROKEN WORDS," "ISRAEL AND EGYPT FAR APART ON EVE OF TALKS," "EGYPTIAN DELEGATION RIGID AND PESSIMISTIC."

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SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0043

NSC WHITE HOUSE WASHDC NIACTIMMEDIATE

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TEL AVIV FOR USIS SECSTATE FOR S/PRS AND PA NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI WHITE HOUSE FOR POWELL

6. POST'S ANAN SAFADI AND DAVID LANDAU SAY THAT MR. VANCE WILL TRY TO CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN POSITIONS WITH AN "AMERICAN COMPROMISE PROPOSAL WHEREBY ISRAEL'S 'SELF-RULE' PLAN FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA WOULD BE ACCEPTED FOR A LENGTHY TRANSITIONAL PERIOD WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO SOMETHING CLOSER TO EGYPT'S 'SELF-DETERMINATION' DEMAND." WRITERS SAY THAT "EVOLUTION AND TRANSITION' ARE THE KEY WORKDS IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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AMERICAN COMPROMISE IDEA, A U.S. SOURCE SAID LAST NIGHT. THE U.S. WILL PRESS ISRAEL TO EXPAND ON ITS OWN PROPOSAL FOR 'REVIEW AFTER FIVE YEARS' SO THAT THE SELF-RULE PLAN DOES NOT RULE OUT FOREVER THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME BROADER INDEPENDENCE EVENTUALLY EVOLVING."

7. DAVAR'S DANIEL BLOCH WRITES THAT "ISRAEL WILL TODAY SUBMIT TO THE COMMITTEE A DRAFT OF A JOINT DELCARATION OF PRINCIPLES BASED ON THE FORMUAL BEGIN AND SADAT HAD ALMOST AGREED UPON AT ISMAILIA. SADAT HAD BACKED OFF AT THE LAST MOMENT OWING TO THE WORDING OF THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE." BLOCH SAYS THAT PREMIER BEGIN TOLD HIM THAT "IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE AGENDA AGREED UPON BY THE PARTIES IS BASICALLY AN ISRAELI ORIGINAL. THE EGYPTIAN

PROPOSAL HAS NOT BEEN ACCEPTED, AND ONLY A FEW OF THE AMERICAN ELEMENTS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED" IN THE AGENDA. BEGIN IS SAID TO HAVE "FLATLY REJECTRED REPORTS THAT ISRAEL HAS GIVEN IN TO AMERICAN OR EGYPTIAN DEMANDS."

8. EDITORIAL GREETINS TO POLITICAL COMMITTEE:
A) HA'ARETZ SENDS A "REMINDER COUPLED WITH A WARNING"
TO PRESIDENT SADAT: "ULTIMATUMS ARE NO NEGOTIATIONS. IF
YOU WANT TO GET SOMETHING YOU ALSO GOT TO GIVE...
ISRAEL'S RESTRAINT MUST NOT BE READ AS A WILLINGNESS ON
HER PART TO PLAY A PASSIVE ROLE...."
B) "ON THE EVE OF CRUCIAL DAYS THE U.S. MUST BE PREPARED
TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE," SAYS THE MODERATE, HISTADRUTOWNED DAVAR. THIS ROLE, HOWEVER, "SHOULD BE
DIRECTED AT SOFTENING EGYPT'S POSITION RATHER THAN
ISRAEL'S," ARGUES DAVAR, "BECAUSE IT IS ISRAEL WHICH IS
REQUIRED TO MAE DANGEROUS CONCESSIONS, WHILE NOONE WANTS
EGYPT TO GIVE UP ANYTHING SUBSTANTIVE."
C) POST (INDEPENENT, MIDDLE OF ROAD) WOULD LIKE BOTH
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SIDES TO GET DOWN TO "REVIEWING OLD DOGMAS." ON THE ISRAELI PART THIS WOULD MEAN "THE PUZZLING CABINET DECISION TO EXPAND THE SETTLEMENTS" AS WELL AS "A REVISION OF MR. BEGIN'S ORIGINAL AUTONOMY PLAN...." ANOTHER DOGMA ALREADY DISCARDED, ACCORDING TO THE POST, WAS "THE FACILE BELIEF THAT U.S. GOOD OFFICES WOULD BE UNNECESSARY IN DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS."

9. WASHINGTON-BASED WOLF BLITZER (POST AND DAVAR)
SAYS THAT "THE U.S. WILL GO AHEAD WITH ISRAEL'S
SCALED-DOWN REQUEST FOR 150 F-16 FIGHTER BOMBERS AND
25 ADDITIONAL F-15 FIGHTERS." QUOTING "INFORMED
AMERICAN SOURCES," BLITZER SAYS THAT MINISTER WEIZMAN
WILL BE INFORMED OF THIS WHEN HE COMES TO WASHINGTON
AT THE END OF THE MONTH. HOWEVER, "PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
MIGHT BE HELD UP TEMPORARILY BY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS.
WASHINGTON DOES NOT WANT TO UPSENT THE ARABS DURING THIS
DELECATE PERIOD." ISRAEL WILL ALSO GET "ONLY A TINY
FRACTION OF THE CO-PRODUCTION RIGHTS TO THE F-16.
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